

"Senator GORTON'S proposal to use the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation to direct funding to the local level is very innovative and will ensure that the funds are used where they most help fish, on the ground," said one Mid Sound Fisheries Enhancement Group board member.

Alison Studley writes, "As a member of the Skagit Fisheries Enhancement Group (Skagit FEG), I whole-heartedly support your endeavor to get salmon dollars to support on-the-ground projects. Local organizations are ready, willing and able to take on this challenge."

In sum: I believe that Washingtonians and local salmon restoration organizations—not bureaucracies in Washington, D.C.—are in the best position to make decisions that will return salmon. That's why my 1999 Interior Bill includes money for these local groups—who have been working on this problem for years—so they can decide how to restore the fisheries. It's time for the federal government to let those who will be affected by the decisions make these decisions. Salmon are a critical part of the Northwest way of life, so let Northwesterners decide how to fix this problem without being told how to do it from Washington, D.C.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. GORTON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to a period for morning business, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

VERMONT ELECTRIC RATES

Mr. JEFFORDS. Mr. President, today, plaintiffs from my home State of Vermont made opening arguments in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia. The plaintiffs, representing the New England Council for Energy Efficiency and the Environment, have raised serious questions about the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission's decision in 1997 to grant power marketer status to a subsidiary of the Canadian company Hydro-Quebec.

The Council is protesting that Hydro-Quebec was unlawfully granted the ability to buy and sell power in the U.S. without regulatory oversight. According to expert testimony in that case, Hydro-Quebec already exercises too much control over Northeastern energy markets, and Vermont ratepayers will have to pay higher energy bills if this license is upheld.

Hydro-Quebec's ability and willingness to exert undue influence on electricity markets in the United States is of serious concern. The company's request last month that the Canadian government sue the United States over fair trade practices is a clear infringement of the legitimate rights of Vermonters to set Vermont electric

rates. The Vermont Public Service Board sets rates equally for all companies, be they foreign or domestic, yet Hydro-Quebec is using its status as a semi-governmental foreign company in an attempt to control these rates.

It is deeply ironic that Hydro-Quebec, a monopoly protected by Quebec law against all retail and virtually all wholesale competition in Quebec, should utilize principles of "fair trade" to lodge a complaint against the United States under NAFTA. Entrepreneurs in New England and New York who want to compete in Quebec are prohibited from doing so, thus precluding meaningful international competition in energy. Yet Hydro-Quebec is able to freely sell its energy in the U.S.

I call upon Hydro-Quebec to come out from behind its monopolistic shield and act like a true competitive utility. Drop your NAFTA lawsuit. End your efforts to undermine Vermont law. Stop using international law to threaten Vermont ratepayers. We want to do business with Hydro-Quebec, but we cannot do so while it tries to exert undue influence in Vermont and New England markets. In Vermont, the Public Service Board sets electric rates, not foreign companies. We will never, ever let a foreign entity write our rules on power sales.

I further call upon the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission to thoroughly examine all means by which a foreign utility may exert influence in the United States. Foreign companies should not be given carte blanche to sell energy in the U.S. until all impacts of that decision are considered—not only market share, but also environmental impacts and means outside of the market by which a foreign company may exert influence. Hydro-Quebec is taking advantage of its enormous size and semi-governmental status to gouge ratepayers in Vermont. This issue is of enormous importance to the people of Vermont, and I hope the Commission will thoroughly examine all of these issues.

Mr. President, I will do all in my power to protect Vermont electric ratepayers from unnecessary manipulation and threats. I am carefully reviewing the law related to wholesale and retail power sales and will be sure to work for a revision of this law if we see that a region of this nation, or a particular state, is being treated unfairly.

EAST TIMOR

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I am horrified by the atrocities occurring in East Timor—where an armed militia is using murder and intimidation to nullify the results of a free and fair referendum. The United States must join the international community in protecting the people of East Timor from mass murder and religious persecution.

During this century, we have seen horrifying examples of dictators and despots whose brutality begins with at-

tacks on the peaceful men and women of the church. This is happening again in East Timor—where members of the Church are being brutally persecuted.

The stories coming out of East Timor are heart-wrenching.

Women and children are massacred within the sanctuary of their churches. Catholic priests, nuns and Caritas workers are being murdered as they try to protect their communities. Nobel Laureate Bishop Beli has been forced into exile. Churches, convents and schools are being burned. Thousands of men, women and children are fleeing from their homes in fear. They are taking refuge in the countryside—where there isn't enough food, water or medicine.

This brutality is occurring with the complicity of the Indonesian military. This is a military that has conducted twenty five years of repression in East Timor. It is a military that the United States has trained and armed.

The international community cannot stand by while civilians are brutally murdered. That is why I support President Clinton's statement of support for US participation in an United Nations peacekeeping force. The force would be led by regional powers—including our strong ally Australia. The United States would help to provide logistical support.

This peacekeeping force would have three goals: to protect the people of East Timor; to restore order and to enable the referendum for independence to be implemented.

The United States must stand up for our interests and our values. We must join our allies in protecting the people of East Timor and restoring peace and stability to their country.

RISK MANAGEMENT FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

Mr. BURNS. Mr. President I rise today as one of the proud cosponsors of the Risk Management for the 21st Century Act.

This bill offers much-needed changes in the area of risk management for farmers and ranchers. Managing risk in agriculture has become perhaps the most important aspect of the business. Agricultural producers who are able to effectively manage their risk are able to sustain and increase profit. An effective crop insurance program will provide farmers and ranchers possibilities for economic sustainability in the future and help them out of the current financial crisis.

The Federal Government can help facilitate a program to unite the producer and the private insurance company. The control must be put ultimately in the hands of the agricultural producer. Although he cannot control risk, an effective management plan will help him to manage the effects of risks, such as weather, prices and natural disasters.

This bill addresses the inadequacies of the current crop insurance program.